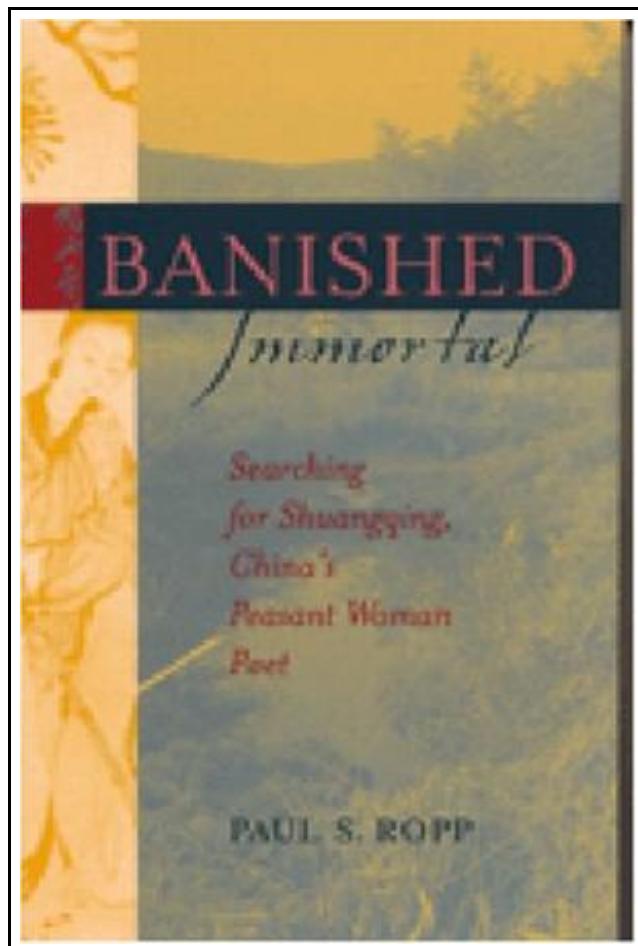


Banished Immortal: Searching for Shuangqing, China's Peasant Woman Poet



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The University of Michigan Press. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Banished Immortal: Searching for Shuangqing, China's Peasant Woman Poet, Paul S. Ropp, In 1737, an obscure painter, poet, and scholar, Shi Zhenlin, published a dreamy rambling memoir in which he described a talented and persecuted peasant woman poet named Shuang-qing. Because of her exquisite beauty, people assumed she was a banished immortal, a divine being who had been expelled from Heaven for one incarnation in the human realm. Shi Zhenlin quoted many of Shuangqing's poems and song lyrics, and in the following two centuries, she became famous as China's only great peasant woman poet. Using Shi Zhenlin's memoir as a window on Chinese literary culture in the eighteenth century, Paul S. Ropp traces the evolution of Shuangqing's place in Chinese culture from the eighteenth century to the present. By way of extensive translations and analysis of Shi Zhenlin's memoir and of Shuangqing's poetry, Ropp demonstrates how changing interpretations of Shuangqing and her poetry reflect changing cultural concerns and preoccupations. In the nineteenth century, she was cited and praised to illustrate the accomplishments of women authors and the high cultural level of her region. In the early twentieth century, some Chinese scholars admired Shi Zhenlin's Shuangqing narrative for exemplifying "modern" romantic and aesthetic values, while others dismissed Shi as a fabricator whose peasant woman poet was no more than a fictional reflection of his own narcissism and self pity. Scholars in Mao Zedong's China hailed Shuangqing as a female peasant genius who triumphed against the gender and class persecution of a repressive feudal system. Ropp also takes account of his own journey of discovery, exploring how one historian goes about reconstructing China's past and breathing life into it. Several chapters and many illustrations feature his 1997 investigative trip to Jintan and Danyang,...

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